



## King AHAB and Jezebel



**1 Kings Ch. 18 & 19 and**

**2 Kings Ch. 9:30-36.**

These happenings occurred about 500 years BC (Before Christ = 500 years before Jesus was born.) The Jews were very particular about keeping records of people & happenings.

Question: "Do you know anybody named Ahab or Jezebel?"

I doubt there are any in Australia! Maybe this story is why - read on:

**Ahab and Jezebel?** Jezebel was married to Ahab who was King of Israel, but it was not for love as we do in Australia ... it was a "marriage of convenience" - for political reasons. That was common in those days, but Jezebel was a very strong willed and self-centred woman. Jezebel was not from a tribe of Israel - but worshipped the idol god Baal.

**She always got what she wanted somehow**, and nobody stood in her way - except God, who later caused her to meet a truly awful end.

Ahab, although King of Israel, allowed her to have a temple built to the idol god 'Baal.' Wow! That did not please God. Jezebel had 450 prophets of the idol god Baal - to amuse, and bless her and do the things 'idol-gods' prophets do in their temple worship.

God's prophet Elijah foretold them both of the manner of their death - very bad indeed, for they both betrayed God (the true and real God of Israel) so much. (1 Ki.21:1-29)



As an example, Ahab wanted to buy a fine vineyard owned by **Naboth** but he would not sell or even exchange it for another piece of land. "It has belonged to my family for generations." Ahab got very unhappy and sulked about it because Naboth would not sell the land to him. So, Jezebel arranged to bribe two men to lie and tell the Priests that they had heard Naboth cursing God. So Naboth was stoned to death for that made-up-story.

Jezebel walked in on Ahab and told him: "Stop sulking, go and take possession of the vineyard, Naboth is dead." (A wicked woman indeed! But she is the Queen = with power!)

Later, Elijah the Prophet of God challenged Jezebel's 450 prophets of Baal to a contest to **discover who was the true God:** Baal - or Jehovah, the Lord God. (450 against 1)

Both sides went up to the top of Mount Carmel with a crowd of onlookers. They each took a bullock with them. They killed the bullock, cut it in pieces and put the animal pieces, on top of a big pile of wood. *Then the test:* The 450 prophets of Baal would call on their God Baal - to bring down fire from heaven and burn up the sacrifice.

**Elijah invited them to go first.** Well, they danced, yelled, shouted and cut themselves to make blood flow and nothing happened. Elijah mocked them (I love this!) "*You'll have to shout louder than that,*" he scoffed "*to catch the attention of your god! Perhaps he is talking to someone, or is out sitting on the toilet, or maybe he is away on a trip, or is asleep and needs to be wakened.*" (v.27 TLB) "They raved all afternoon until the usual time of the evening sacrifice, but there was no reply, no voice and no answer." (V29)

**Towards evening Elijah told his helpers to pour twelve buckets of water over the animal pieces and the wood on his sacrifice and they did that. A metre wide trench was dug around the alter and the wood - to keep excess water from flowing away.**

**Then quietly, Elijah knelt down and prayed to God to send down fire. God did ... down came a big fire that burnt up everything and even the water remaining in the trench that had been dug around the sacrifice - that was burned up too. (V.36-38)**

A great shout - a victory cry, arose from the crowd that: "They fell with their faces to the ground shouting, "Jehovah is God! Jehovah is God!" (V 39 TLB)

Then Elijah had the 450 prophets of Baal killed.

Soon after that, Elijah prayed for rain and the seven years of drought broke because God allowed it to happen only after Elijah prayed. It bucketed down and Elijah outran Ahab in his chariot back down from Mount Carmel to the king's palace as the rain just kept falling. *Some run that was!*

Jezebel was livid with anger at Elijah for killing her 450 prophets of Baal and sent a message to Elijah that she would kill him within 24 hours. Elijah fled because he knew of her bad temper and authority to get bad things done! But God looked after him and **performed a miracle by sending an angel - providing fresh hot bread and water out in the desert - when Elijah woke from a sleep.** That happened twice.



**As life is now, so it was then!**

High office demands integrity ... not **lying and disobeying** God. The message of this story: "**Do not mess with or disobey God deliberately - even if you are a king.**" Especially, if one is a king or queen as their behaviour and choices influence ALL the people - well in this case almost all the people!

**Ahab did both** so God killed him and all his sons too. In 2 Kings chapter 9 and 10: Ahab and his family are ordered to be killed. God will not 'look the other way' (ignore) persistent wrong doing by the leaders of God's people. And yes, Jezebel died after being pushed out of a high window and "local dogs disposed of her body" as was prophesied.